Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Environmental Services Workers Related to Infection Prevention and Control

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INTRODUCTION

• The patient care environment serves as a reservoir for pathogens and can contribute to pathogen transmission and the development of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs).

• Effective cleaning and disinfection can reduce surface contamination in the patient care environment, contamination of healthcare workers’ hands after contact with the environment, and a patient’s risk of acquiring an HAI.

• Thus, Environmental Services workers (ESW) play a significant role in the prevention of HAIs.

• Studies have suggested, however, that current hospital cleaning and disinfection practices are often suboptimal.

• Few studies have assessed the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and practices of ESW regarding the association of infection prevention and control (IP&C) and cleaning and disinfection of patient rooms. Understanding ESW perspectives could prove helpful in designing interventions that successfully improve environmental cleaning and patient safety.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

• A 32-item, voluntary, anonymous survey was offered in English and Spanish to all ESW at five acute-care hospitals of the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) regarding IP&C and cleaning and disinfection of patient rooms.

• To identify potential barriers to effective environmental cleaning and disinfection from the ESW perspective in order to inform future efforts to enhance environmental cleaning.

OBJECTIVES

• To evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) of ESW at the five acute-care hospitals of the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) regarding IP&C and cleaning and disinfection of patient rooms.

• To identify potential barriers to effective environmental cleaning and disinfection from the ESW perspective in order to inform future efforts to enhance environmental cleaning.

RESULTS

• The patient care environment serves as a reservoir for pathogens and can contribute to pathogen transmission and the development of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs).

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STUDY METHODOLOGY

• A 32-item, voluntary, anonymous survey was offered in English and Spanish to all ESW at the five participating hospitals in February-March 2015. Prior to administration, the survey was pilot tested with members of the target audience.

• The survey took 10 minutes to complete and was administered online, using iPads and desktop computers.

• Survey questions utilized Likert Scale answer choices, multi-select options, and free-text responses.

• In analysis, a scaled score, or Rating Average, was calculated for questions with Likert Scale answer choices (minimum score=1, maximum score=4).

• A higher score (closer to 4) indicates a greater potential barrier to effective environmental cleaning compared with a lower score (closer to 1), from the perspective of the ESW who completed this survey.

• $30 Visa gift cards were awarded to randomly selected respondents (n=86).

• Results were shared with Environmental Services (EVS) leadership.

DISCUSSION

• Knowledge

  • 29% of respondents did not know germs can be found on healthcare workers’ hands.

  • 21% often” or “always” worried they may get sick while cleaning patient rooms.

  • 80% expressed interest in further education; topics of interest are shown below:

  • Barriers and Opportunities

  • 45% reported “never” or only “sometimes” receiving useful feedback about the way they clean patient rooms.

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CONCLUSION

• In conclusion, providing education to ESW about HAI epidemiology and prevention, reducing barriers that impede effective daily cleaning, and brightening recognition of the important role of ESW appear to be key ways to enhance the effectiveness of environmental cleaning and disinfection in hospitals.

• There are several potential limitations to this study, including the generalizability of our findings, voluntary response bias, and incomplete assessment of barriers to effective cleaning.

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